...102, No. 52 Thursday, December 25, 1941

December 25
1941

...nnial Star

And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord ;

. . . And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon ; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel : and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came by the Spirit into the temple ; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then he took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word ,

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people ;

A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his Mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel ; and for a sign which shall be spoken against ;

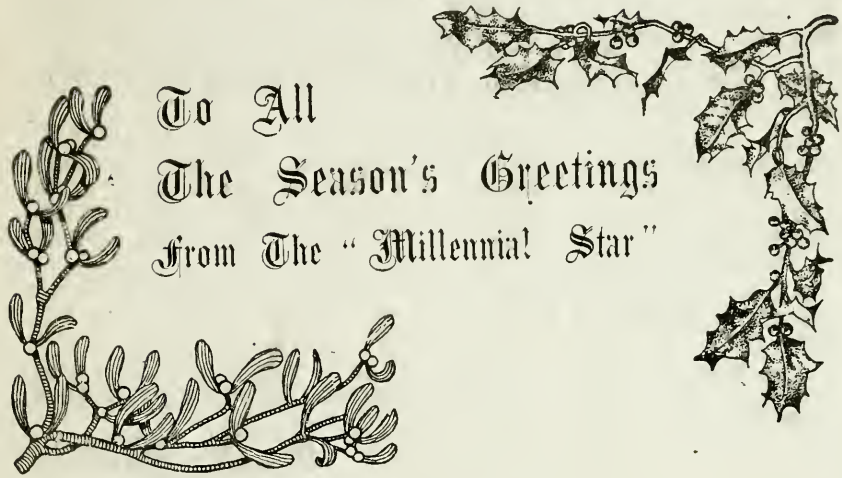
(Yea a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.—St. Luke.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

JAMES P. HILL, Editor—Publisher.



Greetings From The British Mission Presidency

ON the threshold of Christmas and the coming New Year we join with you in praise and thanksgiving, commemorating the birth of the Son of God in the meridian of time. We have been blessed so much as a Church even in these strenuous days. Our baskets have not been empty, our protection has been almost miraculous; we live to testify of the goodness of our Father to us. In contemplation of all these blessings that are ours and in the spirit of happiness and peace of mind and heart, we send our Christmas Greetings to:—

The First Presidency of the Church in Zion, to whom we express our very sincere appreciation for guidance, timely counsel and help in these very difficult times;

The Council of the Twelve, from whom we have received many encouraging letters, containing inspiration, hope and cheer;

All the Councils, Boards and Organisations in Zion. They have supported us in our Mission tasks in a most commendable manner. We have been touched by their eagerness to help us in this country. Every Mission organisation has nothing but praise for them;

Our Christmas Greetings, with a feeling of deep brotherly

love, we send to the District and Branch Presidents and Counsellors of our Mission. We wish to tell them how much we appreciate their constant help, co-operation and sacrifice. They have stood faithful and true in the line of their sacred duties;

All our full time Missionaries now in the Field and those who have been released during the year. Their achievements have been most encouraging. Despite weather conditions, black-out, restrictions of travel, food and lodgings, most of them have been able to rise above their difficulties and accomplish their tasks with credit in the face of opposition, indifference and even hardship;

Our 400-odd Home Missionaries, who have so readily answered the call of the Mission Presidency and, in circumstances that would discourage the stoutest hearts, their work has assumed the proportions of a church-wide movement and will be of inestimable worth to them and to the cause they so faithfully represent; and to

All the Mission Boards and Auxiliaries we tender our very sincere appreciation for valiant, unstinted support and co-operation.

The British Mission Presidency thank you one and all and wish you again a very Happy Christmas and justly prosperous New Year.

ANDRE K. ANASTASIOU.
GEORGE H. BAILEY.
JAMES R CUNNINGHAM.

Message From The British Mission Relief Society Board

IMBUED with the spirit of love and affection, we send to all Sisters in the Church our Christmas Greetings and heartfelt wishes for success and happiness in the coming year.

This Christmastide we again celebrate the birth of our Saviour, and with reverence we contemplate the mortal sufferings of Motherhood, sufferings of body, mind and spirit that even the Mother of Jesus had to endure. We as mothers in Israel bless her name, for she is one of us in the lineage of the choice and noble posterity of spirits foreordained to come to earth in the fulfilment of their sacred duties.

With you we join in song and praise to our Father in Heaven for the Immaculate Gift of His Only Begotten Son in the flesh. May war and bloodshed cease for a moment that the nations of the earth may bow their heads in the solemnity of prayer that Peace may distil upon their minds and give them at least some comfort and respite from the horrors of the day.

We are happy to say that in spite of many difficulties that beset us today, fifty Relief Societies of the British Mission are carrying on, giving succour to the poor, tending the sick,

comforting the bereaved and assisting the Priesthood of the Church.

We wish to commend all the Relief Societies of the British Mission who have provided warm knitted woollens for the comfort and protection of those in the Forces who have to endure the rigours of winter and who have so generously sent to the Mission Headquarters clothing for the refugees.

As a further gesture of our concern in the welfare of those of our Allies who are gallantly defending the Freedom of Democracies, we ask every Relief Society of the Church in Great Britain to send the small amount of five shillings to the British Mission Relief Society Board, who will forward a total sum in the name of all our Societies to the Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem (Mrs. Churchill's Red Cross).

May this Christmas bring you joy in the realisation that you have done your part in sustaining the work and the object of the Relief Society of the Church in Great Britain.

MARIE W. ANASTASIOU,
British Mission Relief Society Board.

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Christmas Greetings From The British Missionaries

WE are very happy indeed to convey through the pages of the "Millennial Star" our Christmas Greetings and sincere good wishes to all the Saints, friends and relatives.

It is our hope and prayer that you will spend this Christmastide in peace and safety and that our land will be protected from the hand of the enemy.

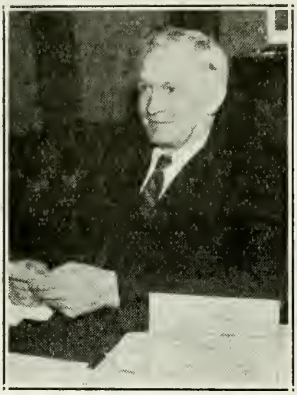
Gratitude we give to our Father in Heaven for the oportunity we have in labouring as Missionaries in His vineyard, and to our parents and Church members who support us in the Mission Field. This indeed is our privilege and our honour to labour among the people of this nation as messengers of the Restored Gospel.

What a wonderful experience it is to be guided day by day by the Spirit of the Lord, to preach His word, and to visit the homes of Saints and friends. Our testimonies are strong, our spirits are high, and our Missionary work is indeed a blessing and an inspiration to us. We have tasted the sweetness of service and have realised the meaning of sacrifice, toil and perseverance, and the joy that one feels through these experiences.

To the young people of the Church, our co-equals, we send a word of encouragement: Prepare yourselves to fulfil a Mission; serve the Lord while you are young; accept the call of the Mission Authorities; join our ranks and remember "this is the eleventh hour and the last time that the Lord shall call labourers into his vineyard to gather his elect from the four corners of the earth."

The Reality Of Christ

By President David O. McKay



David O. McKay

"FEAR not; for, behold,

I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you,

Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the Heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

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AT the outset, it is interesting to note that those who reject as spurious the stories of the annunciation, of the miracles, and of the resurrection, have been forced to acknowledge a greatness in Christ, which can be attached to no other being on earth. With the exception of a few, such as Nietzsche, who looks upon Christianity as "a most powerful instrument of racial degeneration," nearly all the critics, after rejecting Christ's divinity, proclaim His mighty influence and His superiority to all other men.

Illustrative of this, let me refer to a paragraph or two from "The Great Galilean," by Keable:

"We do not know with anything approaching historical certainty of whom He (Jesus) was born, or when, or where; how long He lived, or how long He laboured; and the sayings which are indubitably His are a mere handful."

After writing his story of the Galilean, he says:

"Christ stands for the highest development of man; and, try as we will, we cannot see any other intelligent mind than man's in the universe."

Hold that a moment. Keep the thought in mind when some cynic refers to God as a mere essence or force. To continue:

"Try as we will, we cannot see any other intelligent mind than man's in the universe. To the other forces that we dimly sense we cannot attribute personality, but to Christ we can and must. He is our God."

True, the author is referring to a traditional Christ more than to the historical Christ when he says this, but the two quotations illustrate the point I am making.

Again, Lewis Browne, author of "The Believing World," says:

"Almost two thousand years ago there was born in the Galilean village of Nazareth, a Jewish child to whom was given the name of Joshua, or Jesus. We do not know for certain how the early years of this child were spent. The Gospels recount many legends concerning His conception, birth, and youth, but they are no more to be relied on than the suspiciously similar legends told many centuries earlier about Zoroaster.

EFFICIENCY OF CHURCH OF CHRIST

Yet, of the efficiency of the Church of Christ, this same critic says:

"It has made life livable for countless millions of harried souls. It has taken rich and poor, learned and ignorant, white, red, yellow, and black—it has taken them all and tried to show them a way to salvation. To all in pain it has held out a balm; to all in distress it has offered peace. To every man without distinction it has said: 'Jesus died for you!' To every human creature on earth it has said: 'You too can be saved!' And therein lies Christianity's highest virtue. It has helped make the weak strong and the dejected happy. It has stilled the fear that howls in man's breast, and crushed the unrest that gnaws at his soul. In a word, it has worked—in a measure."

That is a remarkable admission when we realize that Christianity has in reality never yet been fully tried.

Well, we might go on, but these two illustrations will suffice.

Before leaving this phase of our theme, however, let me say that doubt is not to be condemned. Sincere doubting sometimes leads to truth, but to reject without sufficient evidence is fatal to the soul.

TESTIMONY OF LUKE

Luke, who told us about the shepherds and the heavenly choir, was a man of education. He was a Greek of Grecian culture. He was a physician. Though he was not an eyewitness of the Christ, he met many who were and then wrote two accounts which he dedicated either to a ruler or to a friend. In one of these he said: Christ "had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." When Luke wrote that message, he was convinced of the reality of the Risen Christ. Of the value and effect of such nearness and intimacy Mr. Beverly Nichols writes:

"The authors of the epistles were within hailing distance, historically, of Christ, at any rate, when their ideas, which they afterwards transmitted to paper, were formed. The winds had hardly time to efface the sacred print of His steps in the sands over which He walked. The rain had hardly had time to wash away, with its callous tears, the blood from the rotting wood of the deserted cross.

"Yet, these men knew—I can't go on using the word 'believe,' which is far too vapid and colourless—that God had descended to earth in the shape of a certain man, that this man had met an obscene and clownish death, and that the grotesque mode of His dying had redeemed mankind from sin. They knew, moreover, that He had risen from the dead on the third day and ascended into heaven. It is no use saying that their minds were prepared for such legends because of the prophets, and because of the immemorial Jewish tradition that this sort of thing would happen, one day. Our minds might be prepared for all sorts of things which, if they happened, would be rejected for their sheer improbability. But these men's minds did not reject these things. They accepted them implicitly. And at the risk of being a bore, I must reiterate the fact that they accepted something far more astonishing than a statement that the moon was made of cheese, or that little girls are made of 'sugar and spice and all things nice.' They accepted something infinitely more miraculous than that. They accepted Christian tradition."

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Christ's reality must be sensed by you and by me, and the reality of His philosophy must be mine and yours if we hope to advance spiritually and rise above the earth and the things which are akin to it.

With all my soul I believe with Peter, that impetuous apostle, that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." In that day Christ was real to Peter; and He is just as real today.

The whole philosophy of the progress of man is associated with His divine coming. He is the Son of God, who took upon Himself mortality even as you and I, yet divine, even as you and I may become.

In the march of this spiritual progress there are certain necessary and definite steps, if we can only sense them.

A SENSE OF FREEDOM

The first step in spiritual strength is a consciousness of freedom. This is the principle which began when Christ accepted the appointment to His earthly mission. It is Free Agency and is fundamental to individual freedom. In the beginning the Lord asked for someone to go down on earth to redeem mankind. One responded saying: "Send me, and I will make all men do as I say (the words are mine), but I want the glory!" Another replied: "Here I am, send me, and you may have the glory." He would give to each one the right of free agency. There is the beginning of soul progress. God desires to make men like Himself, but to do so He must first make them free. Yes, it is the sense of freedom. You may do as you please; accept or reject the highest and best in life; agree or disagree with the selfishness, enmity and antagonism of the world. Animal instincts permit you to crush your neighbour that you yourself might rise. Accept it, if you wish, or choose the higher and rougher road.

"Know this that every soul is free,
To choose his course, and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth is given,
That God will force no man to Heaven."

SENSE OF SELF-MASTERY

The second is a sense of self-mastery. Before Jesus began His ministry He proved Himself capable of withstanding the Tempter. He was tempted "like as we," yet never once did He yield, and finally declared: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." You know that you cannot rise unless you overcome and conquer. Sneak around your examinations if you will, but in your hearts you will know you haven't conquered the difficulties of your subjects.

Don't merely yield to the appetites of the flesh with an effort to gain pleasure and happiness. If you do, you will find that the happiness you seek is a withered flower that crumbles in your grasp. You go and go until you can't get the desired sensation without destroying yourself physically.

What though I conquer my enemies,
And lay up store and pelf,
I am a conqueror poor indeed,
Till I subdue myself.

What though I read and learn by heart
Whole books while I am young,
I am a linguist in disgrace,
Who cannot guard my tongue.

What though on campus I excell
A champ in meet and fight,
If trained, efficient still I can't
Control my appetite.

What though exemptions write my name
High on the honour-roll,
Electives, solids fail me if
I learn not self control.

What though I graduate and soar
And life is good to me,
My heart shall write me failure till
I learn SELF MASTERY.

SENSE OF OBLIGATION

The third step is a sense of obligation. As an aid in developing this spiritual virtue, Christ, as always, is the supreme example. Truly He gave His life for others. "The foxes have holes, the birds their nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Thus sacrificing His own comforts and even His own needs, He admonished all to "Love your enemies." "Do good to them that curse you." "Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me." "If you have aught against a brother, go to him"—a sublime principle, which, if accepted and applied, would solve difficulties in communities, cities and nations. But the Saviour did not stop in admonishing the one who has ill-will; He went further. Note this: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Service to fellowmen makes easier the taking of the fourth step—consecration to Christ and the right.

When Jesus met the supreme crisis in the Garden of Gethsemane He said: "Father, not my will, but Thine be done."—an example of entire submission of self to the will of God. Weeks before this He had announced the same principle in the paradoxical saying, "He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." The verity of this principle in spiritual growth may be proved by everyday experience. You may test it when you are studying lessons in school. If you will concentrate, that is, "lose yourself" in the study at hand, you will obtain the truth. In other words you will "find yourself." Man's highest spiritual achievement is to speak and act for the good of his fellowmen to the glory of God, and thus make of life a consecrated possession.

CONCLUSION

Christ is real; He lives! "I know that my Redeemer lives," said the suffering Job, "and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh," or the revised version, "out of my flesh," "shall I see God." His life was real. He was born of God. The Babe of Bethlehem, the One perfect Gentleman who ever lived—the Ideal Man whose character was supreme; our Brother, our Saviour, the "Anointed One."

God help us to make Him real in our lives! During the approaching holidays, remember the ideals of His life as we associate His birth with Christmas time.

The Latter-Day Saints' "Millennial Star"

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1941

EDITORIAL

Introspection

YET again we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and even though our most recent memories are those of horror, and the prospects of the future are but "blood and toil and sweat," millions the world over will pause to remember the great event. One is apt to become a little morbid in the realisation of the paradox that although the teachings of the Saviour (in which peace and the love of fellow-men were so strongly emphasised) have survived the centuries, still today practically all mankind are involved in the most vile perpetrations ever known on this earth. Yet it is certain that the doors of a million homes will close this Christmastide in an attempt to shut out that wickedness and revive within their confines the "Spirit of Christmas." Thus that vital spark must be kept alive until the day when its Inspirer shall come and rekindle it into a bright, white flame, to lighten all the earth, never to be quenched throughout eternity.

We Britons, and now our American brothers, have been literally forced to tread this evil track by those who are seeking, indeed making deliberate attempts, to petrify men's hearts and turn them into automatons. Thank God that the major impulse that actuates our determination to vanquish this wicked endeavour is the love of freedom and liberty. It is the sincere wish and every Christian soul and every right thinking person that those in whose hands lies the progress of nations will remember when this dread thing is past, to THINK. These awful mistakes must not be made again.

Surely our world builders must realise that it is because of the constant rejection of the Supreme Philosophy that we are now so far, far from the quietude of peaceful and fraternal living. Surely they will remember that the accumulation of personal wealth is damning and fatal to proper relations among mankind; that amicable arbitration upon the ever

present problems of land distribution and natural earth wealth is the correct means to secure that blissful state that we eulogise, yet ostracise, by our very refusal to acknowledge that its basic principle is the predominant Christian tenet, LOVE.

We talk glibly of Democracy and fearfully condemn all other "isms" that declare different doctrine to that sublime Utopian "People's Government"; but we are content to let governmental heads lead us along many forbidden paths, and if they should slip under the heavy weight of responsibility or through their inability to cope with affairs so large, we are ever ready to condemn them, unthinkingly and utterly.

The salvation of the universe lies with the individual, with you and with me. It's the man in the street, as well as those who "dwell in marble halls," who must display a most decided change of heart, so often talked about, so little tried. The world is composed of individuals and each one's effort counts in the general scheme of things. The present is the time to make your self-examination. The prime necessity of this generation is INTROSPECTION.

Your determination to live better, nobler lives must be visible, and in consequence is bound to affect the other fellow. If each molecule in the mass reforms, the mass must, in time, alter its contour. Too often do we Latter-day Saints tritely remark, "We have the Gospel." True enough, but what are we doing with it? We are "in the world," and though we are commanded not to be "of it," we should by no means "hide our light under a bushel." Walking in humility and faith, gently strong, we must let our light shine before men, that they may see our works, and glorify our Father in heaven. Most definitely a stricter application of the creed we profess is an urgent need, and a thorough regeneration of power to resist evil must take first place in future efforts.

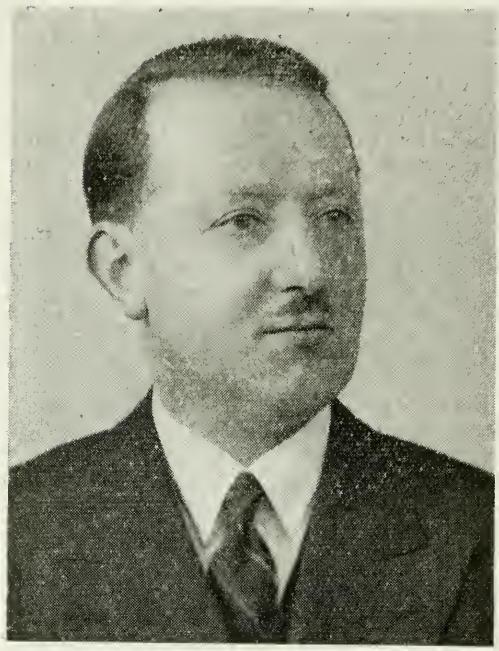
"Blessed are the meek," said the Great Teacher, and symbolic of that very teaching, He, whose birthright was the throne of the Kingdom of Israel, was born in the humble confines of a stable.

That the hearts of those in high places, in whose hands lie the fate of nations, may be touched, that they may realise the object of their work to be the common good of man; that to seek personal aggrandisement is the antithesis of peaceful living; that in their counsels they may introduce a STRANGER—GOD, their Father; and that all their efforts may culminate in the accomplishment of a grand PEACE, preparatory to the coming of the KING of Kings—this is the mighty prayer in all Christian hearts.

J. P. H.

Christmas Of Long Ago In Russia

By President Andre K. Anastasiou



Andre K. Anastasiou

I HAD in mind to write a Christmas story. I have thought a great deal about the Christmas stories I have read and heard, but of all the stories, the most enchanting one is that of my boyhood days at Christmas time in Russia. I was born there, in the land of forests where bears, wolves, foxes and all types of fur animals roam at large in great profusion; of limitless silent steppes, kind-hearted, simple people of the land, Russian winters, those beautiful snowy winters, and the thrills of skating, tobogganing and occasional rides in a Troika, a sleigh, shaped something like a swan, with seats for passengers covered with fur rugs, pulled by three beautiful, well-matched horses, one in the middle between shafts, and one on either side, trained to hold their heads aside and slightly downwards. The one in the middle would look straight ahead and had a "dooga" over his head—an arched bow-like bent wood decoration with coloured leather, brass knobs of all shapes, and silver bells, and affixed to the shafts with expert hands. All three horses would be covered with a net, tassels trailing almost to the ground, and extending in a fan shape over the backs of the horses and down to the front of the sleigh—a decoration as well as a protection against the flying snow thrown up by the horses. And the driver, a rosy cheeked, bright fellow, dressed in fur coat and hat, and fur gloves, would, with pride, hold back the restless animals. At a word, he would be off flying along the snowy roads with a whoop and a shriek, his horses responding to his spirit of sport and speed. It was always a great thrill to ride in such an outfit. Very often two Troikas would race each other with the young people in the sleighs laughing, shouting, waving hands, excited and thrilled. Those horses, all steamed up, were never tired; always impatient to be off again. I have had many rides in horse driven sleighs.

One of the three horses we had was a Cossack horse. Father trained him to wear harness and do ordinary work. Sometimes he did not like to be harnessed to a buggy, as he preferred a saddle. Zytchick was my pal. In the summer I used to take him to the sea and would ride him away from the shore into the deep water and then, when he began to swim, bobbing up and down, I would turn him round and, sliding off his back, would catch his tail—and what a thrill ! He would tear back, pulling me behind him.

One winter day Zytchick was doing nothing, so I got him out, put his harness on, and found some rope to hitch him to my wooden sleigh. Mother's clothes line I used for reins. I led him out of the yard and away we went. It was great fun! Other boys chased me, yelling and wanting to ride with me. Zytchick responded to my urge and off we went down the street, in among the other sleighs. Suddenly a lump of hard snow hit me on the head and another in the face; shielding my face, we ran on to something hard, and over went my sleigh in the snow, and Zytchick ran away. I chased after him, crying, for I thought he would never come back. I returned home very quietly. A neighbour brought Zytchick back.

The memories of those boyhood days of long ago, especially at this time of the year, take me back home to father and mother, my brother and three sisters. My mother and Christmas time live uppermost in my mind. Space and time do not permit of any idle indulgences in childish reveries, yet those memories are sweet, vivid and never failing. Our Christmas at home always had a religious aspect and spirit. We children looked to it with intense anticipation and hope. Mother would be busy for days before Christmas, buying, preparing, cooking endless varieties of sweetmeats, cakes and dishes, so that nothing would need to be cooked during the three holy days. Christmas Eve was always ushered in in the spirit of solemnity and reverence. By 5 o'clock the best room in the house would be looked upon with greater reverence than ever. All prepared food, Christmas tree and gifts would be carefully arranged with a great deal of thought and attention. I can see our best room now on Christmas Eve. The Lampada (a coloured glass oil vessel), suspended in front, dimly lights the ikons. I look at them. Dark, age-old paintings conjure mysterious images and assume almost living form. With the appearance of the first evening Star, mother places a small table covered with white linen in front of the ikons, some hay on the table, and on it she stands a large earthenware bowl containing boiled wheat with sugar and poppy seeds, called Kootja. We all kneel down in prayer.

Happy childhood! The memories of it; even now I see the soft glimmer of the Lampada, the frail little light gently swaying. The shadows move from ikon to ikon. Our sanctum is in semi-darkness. Our eyes are turned to the light. We pray aloud: earnestly, reverently and slowly. After the prayer, mother rises: we follow her. With a sign of the Cross and a bow to the images, we turn and go into the living room. The meal is set before us, consisting of simple things—boiled fish and other Lent dishes. Kootja is the first thing we partake of,

brought from the "sanctum," the food of the Shepherds of Judea. Soon we retire to bed, with high hope and anticipations of the Christmas Day.

The morning was always the happiest and most thrilling. Mother's kisses, and the reverent age-old greeting of the Birth of Christ. We would be dressed in new clothes, or our customary Sunday wear, excited and happy with the gifts from our parents, uncles, aunts and friends.

After breakfast, with the snow on the ground and everything looking dazzling white before our eyes, we would set out to sing carols in the homes of neighbours, friends and relatives. Until midday we would go from house to house. As was the custom in our parts, the people would invite us in, and before the ikons, with our heads bear, we would sing carols, and at the finish scatter some wheat towards the ikons in the room and wish the people prosperity in the New Year and good harvest. We always returned, well rewarded for our efforts, to a warm fire, a house full of guests and more presents. Christmas dinner, with so many "good things of the earth," we always looked forward to with keen relish.

Our family was moderate in all things, but with all the beautiful things of my childhood. I also retain the pictures of the horrible scenes of drunkenness, fights and brawls we used to see in our town. Somehow the solemn occasion of Christmas festivities always produced such excesses. Good people everywhere remained good and upright. They were the ones to maintain the old beliefs and traditions, upon whom depended the structure as well as the foundation of Russian life and order. But excesses grew, and one day the faith of the people, built upon sand, was swept away by the storms of doubt, hatred, oppression and force of political power. The faith of the simple peasantry and gentry of Russia, built on teachings of men rather than on the teachings of the Lord, could not lead the masses of that great country into life of rectitude and virtue. The storms of riotous and unholy life engulfed the people and drove the church and institutions upon the rocks of adversity, poverty, cruelty and oppression.

It is my fervant hope that one day the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ will be taken by Latter-day Saints to Russia to help the people and the government to return to God, to live in peace and love with each other and prepare for His Second Coming, which is very near now.

I have spent many Christmases in other lands, but the Christmas of my childhood days shall always remain with me as the sweetest memory and the most touching story.

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Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, whose foundations thou hast seen.
I Nephi 13: 32.

Peace On Earth

By Elder George H. Bailey

Of the Mission Presidency

"AND there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

AMID the enchantment of the twilight hour upon the rolling plains of old Judea, heavenly hosts heralded the advent into mortality of Jesus the Christ, declaring the burden of His mission to be, **Peace on earth and good will toward all men.** Alas, 2,000 years have passed since that eventful day and during that period peace and good will have been far removed from the earth, and on this Christmas day in the year of our Lord 1941 the whole earth groans under a load of war and hate such as the world has never known. Early in His ministry the Saviour said: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," meaning, of course, that not knowledge alone, but the practical application of truth was to be the basis of freedom. That He taught the truth and exemplified in all His actions the results of the application of truth, none will deny: the confounding of the wise at the age of twelve; turning water into wine at the feast of Canaan; the feeding of the 5,000 from an individual meal; the command to Lazarus to emerge from the tomb; the opening of the eyes of the blind, etc., were but mighty manifestations of applied truth.

The horror of Calvary was not in any sense a victory for the opponents of truth, but a submission by the Author of truth in order to demonstrate that even death is swept aside when truth is applied. The rejection of the truth (as set forth in the great Gospel plan) by the world at large and its submission to the edicts of uninspired institutions, is the cause of our grief and sorrow on this Christmas day. We can never hope to be free from the prevailing conditions of broken hearts and homes and wasted lives, and of want in a world of plenty, unless men shall rise in the majesty of righteous living and by a daily increasing faith in the divine truths, written by the finger of God upon the tablets of stone, amid the thunders of Sinai, reject the false Gods of this age, eliminating the mysticism and unintelligent creeds and bewildering pomp and ceremony, and embrace once again the simple, plain, but all-sustaining laws and ordinances of the everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ.

O that men would realize the true meaning and significance of this, the natal day of Jesus Christ, and in that realization shake off the shackles of selfish greed and lust for power, and fortify their hearts, minds and strength by the application of the simple, all-sustaining truths revealed in the life and teachings of the Master, proclaimed anew in these the latter days through His prophet, Joseph Smith. Until men shall have faith, the will and the courage, so to live, and behold in the true Church of Jesus Christ not a haven of rest for the pampered, sentimental and fanatical, but a boundless ocean of eternal truth, that vital raw material which is the essential basis constituent of the practical progressive life and which leads to the highlands of freedom; yea, until men shall so live and behold the true spirit of Christmas, Peace on Earth can never come. Yet, confident that truth will prevail in the hearts of all honest men and women, we believe that all our sorrows will melt away as the hoary frost before the rising sun, and peace and good will return in ever increasing measure if, as a nation, we will unite ourselves with the Kingdom of God.

Superstition and faith in mystical creeds and dogmas must go, and the lost faith in a living, personal God must be restored. Spiritual values must be understood, virtue restored and the basic laws of physical and mental health must be obeyed. We must remember that the labourer is worthy of his hire and the master his just dues. We must be willing to seek light and life from the Source of all truth, and receive it in the manner that the Giver desires us to receive it. Then shall we hear the Heavenly Hosts once again as they sing Peace on Earth, Good Will towards men.

AS 1941 closes and we review the period past, we are filled with memories varied and poignant. We have all come through a difficult time and it is with deep gratitude to the Lord for His protection and mercy, and with a fervent prayer for the continuance of same, that we face the future. I feel that I should like to express my personal gratitude to all the readers of the "Star" for their continued support and encouragement. Many joyous moments have been my privilege when reading the numerous notes and letters of appreciation that have come to me. Brethren and Sisters and friends, it is that encouragement that goes far to making the effort really worthwhile. I send you my personal greetings, to all the members of the British Mission and readers of the "Star" throughout the world; to the Brethren and Sisters in the forces (to whom, it appears, the "Star" is a cheering weekly messenger) and to our Canadian Brethren in the forces and to those grand New Zealanders, our Maori brothers (now serving in the East); to our former Missionary Brethren from ocross the ocean .still we miss them, very much); to former Mission Presidents, Elder Richard R. Lyman, Elder John A. Widtsoe, Elder Hugh B. Brown and Elder Joseph J. Cannon, all of whom have given me great heart and hope through their inspiring letters. My heart goes out in sympathy to President Jay C. Jensen of the Japanese Mission in Honolulu, Hawaii, and my earnest prayer is that our island Brethren and Sisters may be preserved from this fire of evil.

I love the work that I have been called to do, and my efforts shall be unstinted for as long as the Lord wishes me to continue. May the spirit of peace enter your torn hearts this Christmas and may love for our fellows be predominant amongst our emotions.

—THE EDITOR.

Why We Celebrate Jesus' Birthday On December 25th

THE ancient Christians believed that Jesus was to appear a second time in the heavens and bring to an end the secular order of the world, before that generation passed away. This is the reason why it did not occur to them to write history or to fix dates, so that, when at last they determined to celebrate the birthday of Jesus, there were very widely differing opinions in various branches of the Church as to what day should be chosen.

For example, in the West it was at first thought that Jesus was born on the 20th of May; others favoured the 20th of April; in the East almost all persons favoured January 6th as the probable date. In brief, there appears to have been no authentic record of the birthday of Jesus and it was as late as the fourth century, and the last part of the fourth century at that, before there was any general agreement as to the day which should be adopted and fixed upon in the Church as the birthday of the Christ.

The following is generally regarded as an authoritative statement as to why this date was at last fixed. Chrysostone, the old Church Father, one of the most famous orators among all the Christian fathers, says: "On this date"—that is the 25th day of December—"the birth of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that, while the heathen were busy with their profane ceremonies, the Christians might observe their holy rites undisturbed."

In practically all the Northern nations we find the people celebrating a day after the winter solstice as the birth of their sun-god. Even in Egypt, about this time, they celebrated the birthday of their virgin born Horus, the son of Isis. In Greece they celebrated the birth of Heracles, the god especially dear to the public heart, because he bestowed so many favours upon the common people. In Rome about this time of the year they held their three days Saturnalia, which continues under another name unto the present day.

So all over northern lands the heathen were engaged at this time in celebrating their joyous festivities, and it was at last decided to fix upon the same date in order that the Christians might, undisturbed, celebrate their peculiar rites. In other words, the Church, finding a festival rooted strongly in the hearts of the people—too strongly to be torn up—they decided to accept it; they simply re-named it, re-christened it, and adopted it as their own.

But on account of the pagan origin of this festival, it was some time during the early history of the Church before it was looked upon with any favour. But gradually, Christianity found it easy to absorb paganism because what was then heathen was human, and the pagan element in Christmas was not very far from Christianity.

When Constantine had made Christianity the religion of the

Roman Empire, that religion could have suppressed any heathen thing it really wanted to suppress. The important point to note is how few things it really did not want to suppress. In the old childhood world this day was celebrated because it meant the coming back of their sun god bringing light and warmth and healing in his beams. When Jesus came it broadened and deepened and exalted this idea because He was the source of spiritual light and life as well. This is the glory of the Christmas time.—"Deseret News.

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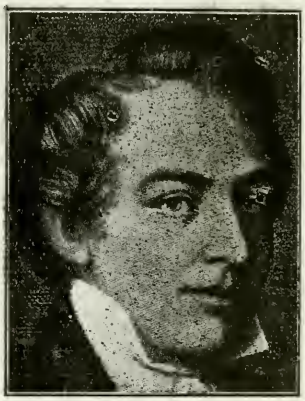
BORN
DEC. 23rd, 1805



MARTYRED
JUNE 27th, 1844

JOSEPH SMITH, LATTER DAY PROPHET

The Saints, the Saints! his only pride,
For them he lived, for them he died.

Their joys were his, their sorrows too,
He loved the Saints, he loved Nauvoo.

Unchanged in death, with a Saviour's love,
He pleads their cause in the courts above.

The Seer, the Seer! Joseph the Seer!
Oh how I love his memory dear!

The just and wise, the pure and free,
A father he was and is to me.

Let fiends now rage in their dark hour;
No matter, he is beyond their power.

—John Taylor.

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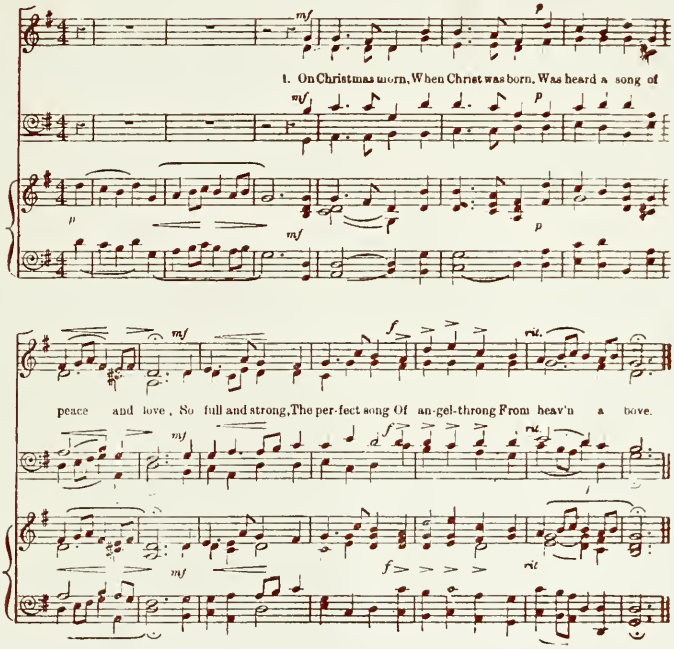
The MILLENNIAL STAR is published weekly by the British Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subscription price: 2/3 for three months; 4/6 for six months; 6/9 for nine months; and 8/8 per year.

149 Nightingale Lane, London, S.W.12 **Telephone BATtersea 4510**

ON CHRISTMAS MORN

Words by N. Weatherby. A. C. Mackenzie, Mus. Doc.

1. On Christmas morn, When Christ was born, Was heard a song of
peace and love, So full and strong, The per-fect song Of an-gel-throng From heav'n above.

2

That song, we know
Sung long ago,
Was sweetest carol ever heard;
And through the year
We all may hear
An echo clear
Of every word.

3

And now today
Its seems to say,
To each of us, "Let discord cease.
Put by your fears,
Your griefs and tears,
While in your ears
I tell of peace!"

4

And on this morn,
When Christ was born,
Let all to Him an offering make:
A victory won,
A good deed done,
Some work begun,
For His dear sake.

The above Carol has been loaned to us by our good friend, Mr. J. A. Pilling

THE ONLY TRUE LIKENESS OF OUR SAVIOUR

Taken from the Portrait carved on an Emerald by order of the Emperor Tiberius, which Emerald the Emperor of the Turks afterwards gave from the Treasury of Constantinople to Pope Innocent VIII, for the redemption of his Brother, who was then a Captive, taken by the Christians.

The following description of the person of our Saviour is taken from a letter written by Publius Lentullus at Rome: "There appeared in these our days a man of great virtue, named *Jesus Christ*, who is yet living among us and of the Gentiles is accepted for a Prophet of Truth, but his own disciples call him the *Son of God*—he raiseth the dead and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance such as the beholders may both love and fear—his hair is of the colour of a full ripe chestnut, plain to his ears, whence downward it is more orient and curling and wavering about his shoulders. In the midst of his head, after the manner of the Nazarites, is a seam or partition in his hair. His forehead is high and very delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a lovely red; his nose and mouth so formed as nothing can be reprehended; his beard is thickish, and in colour like his hair—not very long, his eyes are grey, clear, and quick. In proportion of body he is excellent; his hands and arms most delicately formed. In reproving he is terrible; in admonishing courteous and fair spoken. In conversation, he is very temperate, modest, wise and mixed whit gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him *laugh* but many have seen him *weep*. A man for his singular beauty surpassing the children of men."

The Ludo Press, 373 Earlsfield Road, London, S.W.18.